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**THE KNOW-NOTHING MOVEMENT
IN ILLINOIS
1854-1856**

**READ BEFORE THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
MAY 18, 1912**

BY

JOHN P. SENNING

THE KNOW-NOTHING MOVEMENT IN ILLINOIS.*

BY JOHN P. SENNING.

A new political phenomenon appeared on the stage of national politics in the year 1854. The time of its appearance was most opportune. Incessant agitation of the slavery question had weakened party cohesion. Whatever mode of solving that question parties adopted gave offence. Both North and South had reached that stage in the evolution of slavery agitation when they began to distrust each other at every point. Plans proposed by either Whigs or Democrats instantly aroused scepticism as to the sincerity and motive involved.

Men who felt the pulse of disunion beat fast and regular, threw themselves into the breach, and by barter and concession, checked the disrupting forces. The Compromise of 1850 was a victory for the conservative northern and southern Whigs, but the radical elements of both sections never gave their allegiance to the settlement. In the Southern states, they talked of secession; in the North they opposed the operation of the Fugitive Slave Law. Whig majorities diminished in the state elections during the succeeding two years, thus showing distinctly the drift of sentiment. All efforts of the Whigs to rescue themselves in the presidential election of 1852 were in vain. Democratic majorities swamped them in all except four states, Massachusetts, Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The aggressive attitude of northern and southern Whigs had made union on a national platform and candidate impossible. The hour of mutual concession had closed; national leaders had retired from party councils and radicals had taken their places. The Whig defeat in 1852 therefore marks another mile-post in the annals of party disintegration.

Less than two years from the Whig defeat, the victorious party pledged to a finality on the Compromise measure, overturned

*The author desires to acknowledge the assistance of Mrs. Jessie Palmer Weber, secretary of the Illinois State Historical Society, in the selection and transcribing of newspaper excerpts, and to Dr. Solon J. Buck of the University of Illinois in the preparation of maps.

that settlement, and for it substituted a policy which immediately opened up a flood of bitter sectional feeling. The enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Law undid the work of half a century of compromise and concession directed toward the preservation of the Union. Civil war in Kansas fed sectional hatred, hastened secession, and helped materially in pushing the country into Civil war. The Kansas-Nebraska Law divided the political elements into two great groups, pro-Nebraska and anti-Nebraska men. The former gave their allegiance to the Democratic party, but the latter had no common party affiliation. The Whig party continued only as a local or state organization; the Free-Soilers were not united; and the Abolitionists had fastened a stigma upon their name which was hard to lose. For nearly a quarter of a century, party disintegration in the North had gone on. The Kansas-Nebraska Law supplied the irritant for a nucleus, around which gravitated the molecular elements of opposition to the Democratic party. It was, however, merely the beginning of a nucleus. While these languid elements were negotiating with each other for a common principle upon which to organize and assume a party name, the new political phenomenon, the Native-American Party, more commonly known as the Know-Nothing Party, suddenly put in its appearance, and it seemed, for a time, that all the elements might unite under the banner of this organization. From the beginning of American history, a natural distrust and jealousy of an overweening foreign influence in American politics laid the foundation of a nativistic movement. Interest varied in direct ratio to the tide of immigration. When that tide reached hitherto unprecedented heights between 1850 and 1854 organizations which before had been only quasi-political, made politics their specialty and built up, under the guise of a secret society, a formidable political party. During its nascent stage, it contented itself by cooperating with leaders of other parties, but its influence proved so far-reaching that it soon advanced its own candidates. By means of secrecy, the native Americans produced startling results in elections, since neither platforms nor candidates were announced to the public. To understand how the Know-Nothings accomplished their ends so successfully it is necessary to examine their organization.

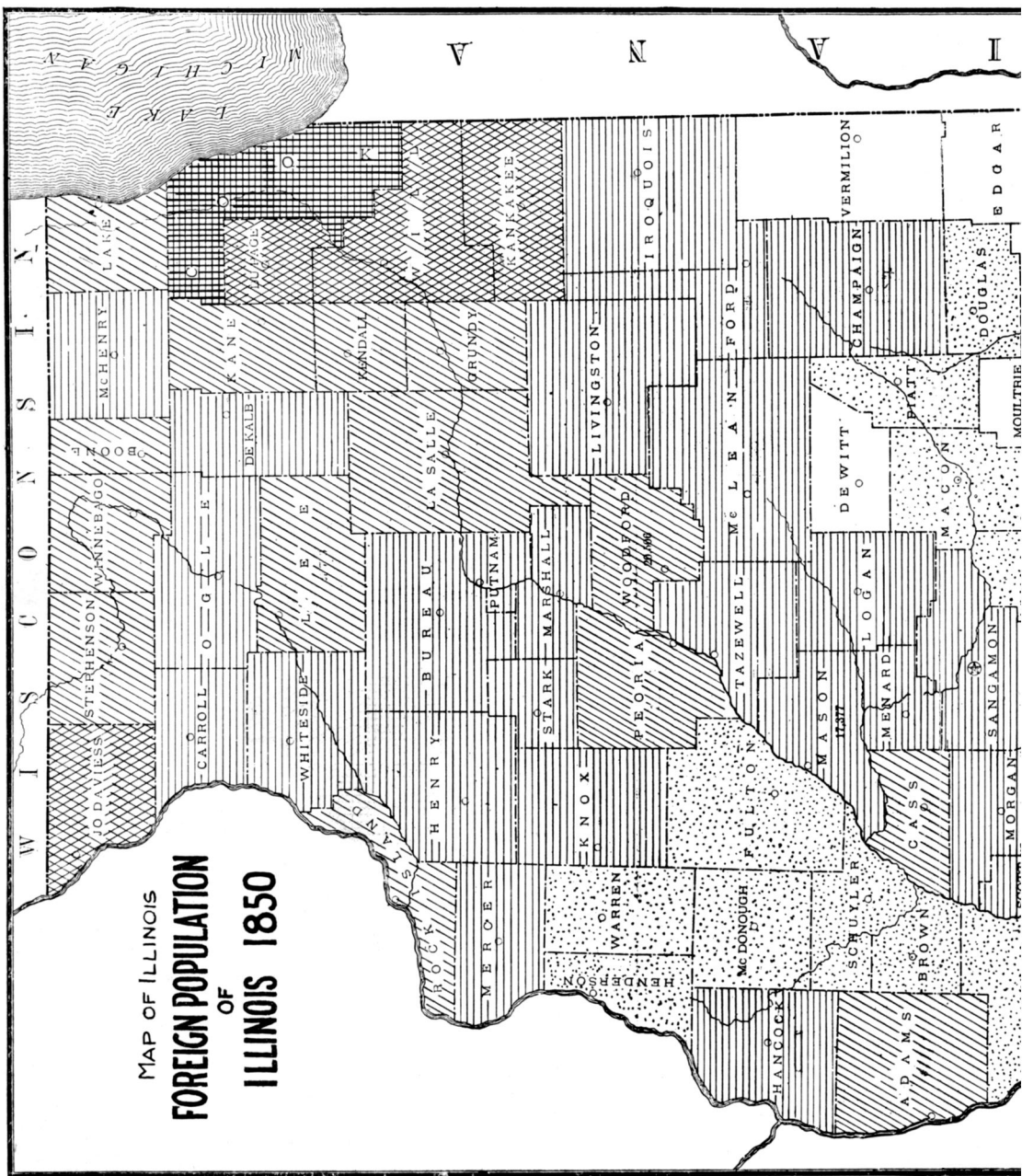
In the earliest stages of growth, members, before being accepted into the order, were obliged to pledge themselves to support all efforts to require a longer term of residence for foreigners

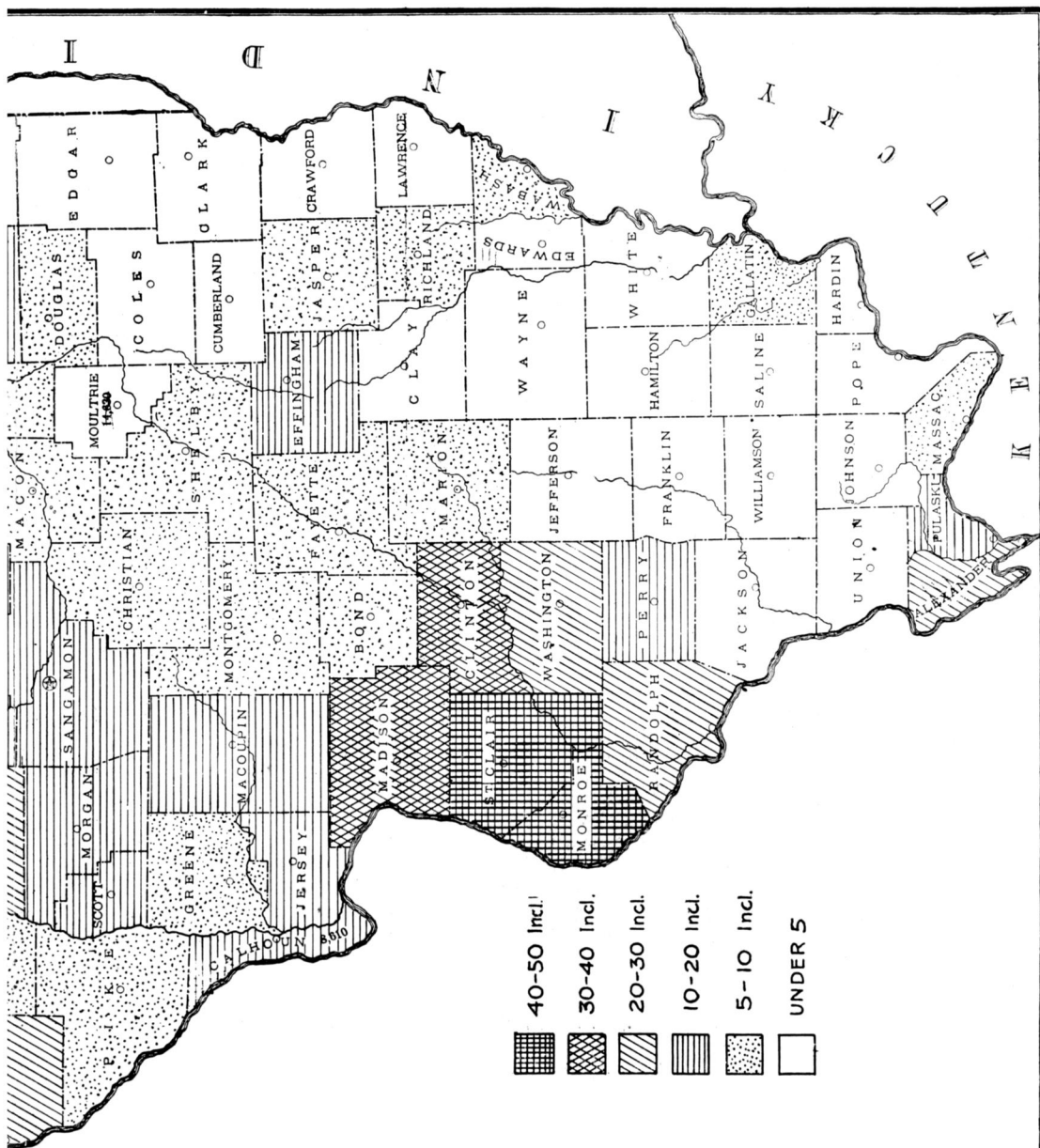
**MAP OF ILLINOIS
FOREIGN POPULATION
OF
ILLINOIS 1850**

The map displays the following counties from west to east:

- Adams
- Hancock
- McDonough
- Warren
- Henderson
- Knox
- Stark
- Marshall
- Putnam
- Bureau
- La Salle
- Grundy
- Kane
- DeKalb
- Carroll
- Whiteside
- Henry
- Mercer
- Rock Island
- Madison
- Morgan
- Sangamon
- Macoupin
- Platteau
- Champaign
- Vermilion
- Edgar
- Douglas
- Peoria

The map uses various hatching patterns to denote different foreign population groups as of 1850.





before the privileges of naturalization were conferred, and to oppose the election of Roman Catholics to public office. To secure thoroughness a plan of lodge organization was adopted, and, by a system of gradation, a hierarchy was formed. At the bottom was the ward or county council, composed of delegates from respective councils within the prescribed area, and so on to the district, state and finally the Grand or National Council. Initiation into a lodge consisted of three degrees—the first was open to anyone who would subscribe to the general pledge against foreigners and Catholics; the second and third were conferred with more caution. The direction of the order rested in the hands of those at the top of the hierarchy; the few councilors issued their dictum to the next lower grade, and so on down. Such a system was well adapted to local purposes, but as the organization reached out, the system itself broke down, and by 1855 all pretence at secrecy was officially abolished.

It will be recalled that such a combination of circumstances, in the later forties and early fifties, as (1) political revolutions on the Continent, (2) economic distress in Ireland, (3) the discovery of gold in California, and (4) the activity of emigrant agents, stimulated a great influx of Germans and Irish. The immigrants from 1851 to 1854 more than trebled those of the entire preceding decade. They caused congestion in the cities, crowded the industries, and lent themselves as willing tools to political bosses. As a result of the attention shown them, many acquired an exaggerated sense of their self-importance, became arrogant at the polls, and, in the eyes of the better class of citizens, appeared as a menace to political, economic, social and religious progress. The political responsibility of this condition rested in part on both political parties, but especially upon the Democrats. Even the party name, Democrat, became a lure to the foreigner unacquainted with American institutions. The politicians were fully aware of the influence they were bringing to bear upon the foreigner and exerted every line of persuasion to enlist the immigrants into the ranks of the Democratic party. Often before the ocean brine had a chance to dry on their clothes, bosses rushed them to the polls.

The era was also one of religious unrest. The Protestants were constantly at variance with the Catholics and nursed the belief that the Catholic church aspired to temporal power in the United States. Street preachers in practically every large city

took advantage of this natural credulity and prejudiced the public mind against the Church of Rome.

These external causes gave the native American party vitality, and stimulated its growth; while the close organization within gave it unity and efficiency. However, nativism spent its force in the Atlantic sea-board states. It must be noted that the movement spread across the United States and into the territories, but it was practically without any issue west of the Alleghenies. Opposition to the foreign immigrant in the West would have proved suicidal to its development.¹ Newspapers gave glowing accounts of the vast opportunities the West offered to foreigners who sought the United States as their home. No section was more disappointed than the Northwest at the failure of the Homestead Bill² to receive the endorsement of Congress in 1853.

As the means of communication by water and rail improved, western communities advanced in material prosperity; and, among them, Illinois was in the lead. In 1850, Illinois may still be called a frontier state, but, like the neighboring commonwealths, she had crossed the meridian of frontier life and was rapidly advancing in manufactures, commerce and the industrial arts. Her Legislature responded to the needs of the time, enacted wise laws, and granted charters for the improvement of means of communication. The net-work of railways, begun in 1848, within the next ten years spread over the entire State,³ bringing Illinois into close touch with the markets of the United States and stimulating growth in wealth and population. Practically every state in the Union contributed to her population, as is shown by the census of 1850.⁴ Easy access by water to the Southern and Middle states drew from them large numbers which, in time, constituted the old conservative element of

¹Illinois State Register, November 27, 1851. The paper is elated that no native American party exists in Illinois, and praises emigration organizations for directing foreigners to the West.

²Illinois Journal, July 6, 1854. Anticipating the enactment of the Homestead Bill before the Senate, The Journal urges foreign immigrants to "lose no time" in getting ready to accept the opportunity.

³Ibid, July 25, 1855. Speaking of the excellent reputation of German immigrants—"Our German settlers * * * are valuable acquisitions to the State and are doing good service in opening up its waste places to the hand of cultivation. * * * It is seldom indeed that we hear of one being in the poorhouse or under the care of a pauper committee."

⁴Poor, Henry V.: Manual of Railroads of U. S. 1883, pp. 687-745.

⁵United States Census Report of 1850.

Southern Illinois. The completion of the Erie Canal and the extension of the railroads westward made Illinois also accessible to the emigrant from New England, New York, and Ohio. Mr. Greeley's injunction, "Young man, go West," was a conviction with thousands long before that sage gave the advice. Illinois was in the very heart of the West, and therefore offered exceptional advantages to the frugal Yankee, the opportunist, the famine-stricken Irishman, and the oppressed on the European continent. The open prairies welcomed the settler in whose behalf the State used every legitimate means to secure liberal Homestead legislation from Congress. The construction of railways and public works of every description, the growing factories and the land rapidly increasing in value, offered opportunity for capital and labor. It may be observed from these conditions that the population of Illinois lacked homogeneity since it was assembled from widely separated geographical areas. The emigrants from the Southern and Middle states were gradually outnumbered by an influx from New England, New York, and Ohio as seven to three.¹ These elements from the East and South were generously infiltrated with foreigners, chiefly from Germany, Ireland, and England. Except for the thickly settled colonies of Germans and English in Monroe, St. Clair, Madison, and Clinton counties, in the pit between the Kaskaskia and Mississippi rivers, the bulk occupied the northern half of the State.² A large corporation³ had its agents on the continent, in England, and in Ireland, who distributed literature describing the "wonderful opportunities" men would find in the frontier states. By this means, and with the help of those already in Illinois, thousands were annually directed from their homes beyond the Atlantic to the rich Prairie State. The Irish except where employed on railroad construction, showed a decided predilection for the cities, while the Germans and English became prosperous farmers.

¹ United States Census Report of 1850.

The Southern States ranging in order of contribution—Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Missouri, Maryland. Total, 74,584. The Northern states ranging in order of distribution—New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Vermont. Total 248,305. Ranging states of both sections in order—New York, Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Indiana, Virginia, North Carolina, Vermont.

² See map on Distribution of Foreign Population.

³ Illinois State Register, Sept. 13, 1849. "North American Land and Emigration Company." Its central office was at 130 Broadway, New York. Agents for Illinois were Messrs. Ash and Diller of Springfield.

A clear understanding of political conditions in Illinois throughout the 50's is impossible without taking into consideration the elements of population, and by noting the distribution of the various nationalities. A line drawn east and west through Springfield, divides the State into two fairly well defined political sections; the origin of the population south of this line may be traced to Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and North and South Carolina, interspersed with a few Yankee families and other Northerners, and a sprinkling of foreigners; while the origin of the population north of this line may be traced to New England, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, and a large portion of it to European states. In every respect Northern Illinois showed superior industrial vigor and prosperity. The East and West were united in 1852 by rail when the Michigan Central reached Chicago.¹ From this rapidly growing city, steel rails threaded every part of the State and points beyond. Along these great highways moved the commerce of the Mississippi Valley, and emigrants made their way westward to transform the forests of Illinois into cornfields and the raw prairie into wheatfields. Until the opening of the Erie Canal and the building of railroads, Southern Illinois dominated the political ideals of the State. When, however, the population from New England and from states in the same latitude poured in and was constantly reinforced by large numbers from beyond the Atlantic, two rival sections with different political ideals and social interests appear. Then, as now, State politics had its source in national politics, and local parties derived their inspiration from national parties. Internal improvements and the tariff were questions of great concern to the entire State and found equal support by either party; but on slavery there was no such unanimity of opinion. Mere mention of that question would array one section of the State against the other.

Party organization in Illinois was severely tested after 1850. Illinois ranked as a safe Democratic State; yet the Whigs managed to maintain a bold front through the perilous campaign of successive defeats for State offices. In 1851, the Illinois Legislature endorsed, by unanimous vote, the principle of squatter sovereignty as applied to the Territory of New

¹ Poor's Manual of Railroads, 1883, p. 637.

Mexico,¹ while four years later, not even all the Democrats in the General Assembly² would support a resolution favoring the Kansas-Nebraska measure. This change of sentiment may be attributed to the operation of the Fugitive Slave Law. Shortly after its enactment, the Common Council of Chicago declared it unconstitutional, and for four successive days large crowds gathered in front of North Market condemning its passage in vigorous terms.³ The voice of protest was unanimous throughout Northern Illinois.⁴ Party disintegration, very apparent among the Whigs since 1852, also infected the strong Democratic organization in 1854.

The very men who were responsible for the party schism in the Democratic ranks, upon returning to their constituencies, were confronted by an angry electorate. Douglas' own city, Chicago, repudiated him, refused to welcome him home, and, when he attempted to address his people, they jeered him, and pro-

¹ Illinois State Register, August 31, 1854. Quotes the Resolution from the Legislative Journal of 1851. "Resolved—That our Liberty and Independence are based upon the right of the people to form for themselves such government as they may choose. And that this great privilege, the birthright of freemen, * * * ought to be extended to future generations, and no limitations ought to be applied to this power, in the Organization of any Territory in the United States, of either a Territorial government or State constitution, provided the government so established shall be Republican and in conformity with the Constitution of the United States."

² Illinois State Register, March 2, 1854. The State Senate sustained Douglas on Feb. 24, 1854, by a vote of 14 to 8. Of those in the negative, five, Campbell, Cook, Judd, Osgood and Palmer were Democrats, and three, Gillespie, Gridley and Talcott were Whigs. See House Journal, pp 52-53. The House of Representatives voted on the same resolution, Feb. 15, 1854. 33 Democrats and 3 Whigs voted for, and 8 Democrats, 13 Whigs, and 1 Free Soiler against it. Those not voting—13 Democrats and 5 Whigs. In Lincoln's Works, Vol. II, page 245, occurs a letter of Lincoln to a friend, dated Aug. 24, 1855, in which he hints at the possible origin of the resolution sustaining Douglas' course in 1854. "Of the 100 members comprising the two branches of that body, about 70 were Democrats. These latter held a caucus in which the Nebraska Bill was talked over, if not formally discussed. It was thereby discovered that just three, and no more, were in favor of the measure. In a day or two, Douglas' orders came on to have resolutions passed approving the bill, and they were passed by large majorities."

³ Illinois Journal, Feb. 11, 1854.

Illinois Journal, Feb. 15, 1854.

⁴ Quincy Whig, Sept. 15, 1854.

Alton Daily Courier, Feb. 11, 1854.

At a mass meeting of Whigs, Democrats, Germans and Irish in Alton, the people declared the portion of the Nebraska bill repealing the Missouri Compromise Line a gross violation—a compromise which the states are morally bound to preserve."

Morris Gazette (Grundy Co.) March 2, 1854.

Illinois Journal, Sept. 2, Sept. 11, Sept. 16, 1854.

Illinois State Register, Apr. 6, 1854. A mass meeting at Freeport declared—"Resolved—That the free states should now blot out all former political distinction by uniting themselves into one great Northern Party, and pledge their property and lives that there shall be no further extension of slavery, either by the abrogation of the Missouri Compromise or annexation from Mexico or Spain."

Tazewell Mirror, August 3, 1854.

nounced him a "renegade," a "traitor." William A. Richardson, Douglas' lieutenant in the House of Representatives, found no one except his own family to greet him upon returning to his home at Rushville, Ill. The antagonism created, wherever Douglas sought to explain his position before audiences from Chicago to Quincy, and from the latter to Springfield, exceeded all bounds. Crowds might jeer and hurl bitter invective at Douglas, but he knew how to fight; he may have flinched at times but never did he crouch.¹ The fury against the champion of the Kansas-Nebraska measure led him to suspect the existence of secret organized opposition, the like of which he had very recently encountered in the East; and so the sharp edge of his abuse fell upon what he knew with certainty to be the Know-Nothing order. These secret organizations, of long standing in the East, were of exotic nature in the West. The Democratic party trembled at the formidable opposition first in the Seaboard states and now in the Mississippi Valley. Leaders, like Douglas, felt that the main purpose of this society aimed at the destruction of their party. The Illinois State Register reflects that: "The entire project was aimed directly against the Democratic party; started solely for the purpose of breaking down Democracy."²

Know-Nothingism in Illinois is rather elusive. Mention of it in the newspapers, prior to 1854, is usually made for the sake of party argument; never as an issue.³ David L. Gregg's defeat for nomination by the Democrats for governor in 1852 and the victory over him of Joel A. Matteson, were attributed by the Whig press to the fact that Gregg was a Catholic. The contest, one of personalities and fitness for the peculiar conditions under which Illinois then suffered, turned upon a very close margin. The people demanded a business-like administration, and Mr. Matteson's wide experience in the commercial world recommended itself to the astuteness of the Democratic leaders. On the other hand, the Whigs preferred Gregg because he was the weaker man, and if he had been nominated the chance of a Whig victory would have been much greater. The Know-Nothings are mentioned with increasing frequency as the campaign of 1854 waxed warm; yet they merely awakened suspicion. The Illinois State

¹ Johnson, Allen: Stephen A. Douglas. pp. 258-280.

² Illinois State Register, August 3, 1854.

³ Illinois State Register, June 17, 1852.

Alton Daily Courier, June 24, 1852.

Register said: "The Know-Nothings are suspected of being about, but no one knows anything of them or what they design."¹ Their identity was guarded by handgrips, signs and manner of speech; local lodges seldom met twice in the same place and usually convened at night; meetings and meeting-places were announced by little scraps of blank paper, varying in shape, size, and color, the meaning of which was intelligible only to the regularly initiated Know-Nothings; and no records whatever were kept of their meetings. Everything was done under the closest oath-bound secrecy as long as the original organization remained intact.

As the Campaign of 1854, advanced Democratic papers scented danger, and announced repeatedly, in bold headlines, "Democrats, Beware of Secret Societies."² The election indicated unmistakably the validity of the suspicion for the direct and indirect success of the "Secret Societies" and awakened profound misgivings for the future of the party whose organization had until recently been invulnerable. The Know-Nothings elected their candidates in the Third and Fourth Congressional Districts, and in the Seventh lost by only a single vote.³ Their influence was also felt in the elections to the Lower House of the General Assembly, which the Democrats lost by a good margin. From the first mention of it in 1852 until the close of the campaign in 1854, Know-Nothingism remained an uncertain factor. The Whigs lost all party coherence after the crushing defeat in 1852; the Free Soilers in Northern Illinois gained vitality in these trying times due to the operation of the obnoxious Fugitive Slave Law, and the Democrats were hopelessly divided upon the Kansas-Nebraska measure. Therefore the results Know-Nothingism achieved in the one campaign of 1854, in view of the general political chaos, State and Nation wide, augured well for it to step into the place of the decadent Whig party. Each political group now made a careful inventory of its stock, preparatory for the presidential election of 1856.

The Know-Nothing order developed into a political power in less than a decade preceding the enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska measure. Leaders of the isolated ward lodges acquired

¹ Illinois State Register, August 16, 1854.

² Illinois State Register, Nov. 2, 1854.
Joliet Signal, Oct. 29, 1854.

³ Norton and Knox were labeled Know-Nothings. It should be noted however, that they, as Archer in the 7th Dist., merely had the endorsement and support of the secret order.

political sagacity and saw the influence their secret oath-bound organization could play in politics. They capitalized this valuable asset by building up a hierarchy¹ of lodges in city, state, and nation. Municipal and State elections² were often determined in their entirety by careful planning in the mystic shrines of city, district and state councils. The influence of the Order repeatedly proved itself in the city elections of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston, and, after 1852, in New Orleans, Cincinnati and St. Louis. Since the defeat of the Whigs in 1852 the Know-Nothings showed their influence in the State elections of New York, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. These results inspired hope of electing the next president.

However, the Know-Nothing party possessed none of the characteristics which could adapt it to a national organization. Its very element of strength as a vote-getter, secrecy, was impossible of enforcement as the party reached out to control national politics. Its creed was neither a national nor a vital issue, for opposition to the Roman Church even in that bigoted age was restricted to a few states only, and the war upon foreigners arose from a corrupt use of them by political bosses, a practice most common in immigration centres. Nor was the ambitious Order immune to the powerful disintegrating force, slavery. No party could embrace or ignore slavery and remain national. The day of compromise was past; yet there were those who still clung to the idea of a Union based upon compromise. It was this fraction of conservatives who sought refuge in the useless Know-Nothing party in 1855 and 1856.

Bearing in mind, then, the political chaos existing in Illinois in 1854, and the influence Know-Nothingism had in the election of that year, the further object of this paper is to trace, as well as the records yield the information on the subject, the Know-Nothing organization in Illinois as a party. The election contest of 1854, closed with the political star of the Know-Nothings in the ascendant. The Kansas-Nebraska measure had furnished the fuel for the heat of the contest. With the Democrats it was a test of party loyalty, and since the followers of Douglas constituted the dominant party of Illinois, it became a question whether the people of his state were ready to support the doc-

¹ Whitney, *Defence of the American Policy*, p. 283.

² *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, vol. 4, pp. 534, 537-8. *Forum*, vol. 17, pp. 530, 534.

trine of popular sovereignty in the territories or whether they preferred to stand by the settlement of 1850. The ranks of Douglas' followers came from the conflict sadly diminished.¹ Whither were those voting against the doctrine of popular sovereignty to go? The Free Soilers of Northern Illinois were utterly opposed to popular sovereignty, as well as to the settlement of 1850. Consequently the only hope of the anti-Nebraska Democrats lay in a union with the Whigs who, however, were also without leadership. Here then were the essential elements for the crystalization of a new party—elements which the Know-Nothing organization seized upon.

Under the highly exciting conditions of the times, the Know-Nothing party built its hierarchy which, in less than a year, ramified every section of the State.² Old party lines were broken; new party alignments along sectional lines were in the process of formation. Therefore, the appearance, at this juncture, of the ritualistic secret organization, made men susceptible to it. Northern and Central Illinois had the largest representation in the State Council which met alternately at Chicago and Springfield. Those most active in shaping the policy of the party were: W. W. Danenhower of Chicago, President of the Council; Joseph Gillespie of Madison County; Judge S. T. Logan and Dr. William Jayne of Springfield; James Miller and O. M. Hatch, every one of whom had been active leaders in the Whig party. Early in the history of the party its leaders must have been convinced of the impossibility of forming a strong state-wide party. Of a Council meeting held in Chicago, May, 1855, the *Chicago Democrat*³ makes this observation: "We understand they had a very stormy time yesterday afternoon. The council is divided on the Jonathan and Sam question.—The Jonathans, who were first started in this city by a gentleman who was a candidate for a high official position at the late city election, appear to be in the ascendant.

"The Sams are anti-foreign and anti-Catholic. The Jonathans are anti-slavery, but not against foreigners. They will admit all foreigners who disavow temporal allegiance to the Pope.

¹ This fact was well shown in the election to the U. S. Senate of Lyman Trumbull, a Fusion candidate, over Joel A. Matteson.

² By the Fall of 1855, repeated mention in the press from every section of the State would, at least lead to that conclusion.

³ *Chicago Democrat*, May 5, 1855.

"The Sams are backed up by Judge Douglas, who was yesterday visited by large numbers of the Order of pro-slavery tendencies, who are delegates from the Southern part of the State. He evinces a great interest in the progress of Sam * * * The Jonathans, however, are taking the lead * * * Already large numbers of Germans, English, Scotch and Irish have joined them and they promise to swallow up Sam completely, who is now chiefly supported by old Hunker Whigs, Old Hunker Democrats, and old fogies generally with Judge Douglas to cement the whole if possible into one mass in order to revenge himself upon the foreigners, who are distinctly opposed to his pro-slavery principles. * * * " The session evinced a sharp division of opinion between the leaders from the northern and southern sections of the State. It also revealed the stratagem¹ used throughout the approaching campaign by the followers of the astute Little Giant of the West, a stratagem which forced the Know-Nothings into many clandestine alliances. Two months later their tenets found formal expression in a party platform² adopted at Springfield. The document was evidently designed to catch votes. It declared the repeal of the Missouri Compromise "a gross violation and disregard of a sacred compact," that the Compromise "should be restored" and demanded of its "candidates for office * * * their open and undisguised opinions upon this question." Those who had opposed the repeal in 1854, must have found consolation in these declara-

¹ Illinois Journal, Oct. 2, 1854. Quotes the Bloomington Pantagraph on a speech of Douglas at Bloomington, in which he is credited to have said: "We have a lodge whose members are freely admitted to all other lodges throughout the State and we are thus kept posted upon all their secrets." It is doubtful whether Douglas was quoted correctly, even more doubtful whether he ever made the statement with which the Pantagraph credits him. By Oct. 1854, the Know-Nothings were merely beginning to organize in the State. However, one thing is fairly well established, namely, that the Pro-Nebraska men succeeded in becoming members and fraternized with Fillmore men.

² Illinois Journal, July 11, 1855.

The platform was adopted according to the Illinois State Register of July 19, 1855, by a vote of 74 to 35. The content bears a striking resemblance to the Whig platform of the previous year. All save the part which related to the restoration of the Missouri Compromise line seems to have been ignored but that portion alone was widely commented upon. Of the men attending the Council meeting the Illinois State Register, July 18, 1855, says: "Not more than three or four of them had ever been heard of before in connection with politics. The actual leaders in different parts of the State had not the courage to appear openly in a State Council, but sent cat's-paws, who had nothing to lose by exposure. Still, their finger marks are quite apparent." The men referred to were Jesse O. Norton, and Joseph Gillespie, On the Know-Nothing tenets in the platform the same paper comments: "Recent popular developments have softened the harsh features of their proscriptive platform in this respect."

tions. Again, "We distinctly assert that Congress has full power under the Constitution, to legislate upon the subject" (slavery) "in the territories of the United States." There was no disguising of the fact that this was intended for the Free Soilers. Native Americanism received only slight consideration at the hands of the men who made the platform. What they said on the point was so ambiguous and so modified as to be practically meaningless. The ingredients in the "American Platform of Illinois" were selected with a view to appeal to a wide electorate, but only caused general disappointment instead. Poor "Sam" who had been the storm centre at the Chicago meeting two months earlier, found himself entirely outdone. Still the platform possessed the merit of containing enough of each ingredient to make it acceptable in some respect to every interest—the half-hearted Free Soiler, he who opposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the man with nativistic tendencies.

With a public enunciation of its principles, the Know-Nothing party in Illinois entered upon its last stage of existence, namely, the active participation in the election of 1856. Its leaders took part in the meeting of the National Council, which convened at Philadelphia in February, 1856, to devise a platform and nominate candidates. When a portion of the Northern delegates bolted the convention, on account of the bitter slavery discussion, seventeen from the Illinois delegation are said to have followed. The loyal contingent of Illinois carried the Fillmore enthusiasm into the State organization, nominated a State ticket,¹ a full quota of presidential electors, and also entered into

¹ Illinois State Register, May 15, 1856.

ILLINOIS KNOW-NOTHING TICKET.

"We understand the Know-Nothings have published the following: For governor, Wm. B. Archer, of Clark; lieutenant governor, M. L. Dunlap, of Cook; secretary of state, Anthony Thornton of Shelby; auditor, Hiram Barber, of Washington; treasurer, James Miller, of McLean; superintendent of public instruction, Ezra Jenkins, of Fayette.

Presidential Electors—Senatorial: W. W. Danenhowe, of Cook County, and Joseph Gillespie, of Madison county.

Congressional—1st district, Charles M. Willard, of McHenry county; 2d district, Henry M. Kirk, of Cook county; 3d district, Alfred M. Whitney, of Champaign county; 4th district, John Durham, of Tazewell county; 5th district, James Erwin, of Brown county; 6th district, Shelby M. Cullom, of Sangamon county, 7th district, Thos. Mulligan, of Piatt county; 8th district, Joseph H. Sloss, of Madison county; 9th district, William H. Parish, of Saline county."

The Know-Nothings doubted for some time whether to nominate State officers. A portion of them insisted, however, on a full State ticket. Archer, Dunlap, Thornton, and Miller declined the nomination. Thornton joined the Buchanan forces

the contest of nominating for the National House of Representatives. Their ardor, however, received a set-back when four of the candidates nominated for high State offices courteously declined the honor. Still undaunted, the Council bolstered up a second State ticket for all the offices except that of State Treasurer. Their nominee for that office ran on the Republican ticket. The Congressional field proved extremely barren for the Know-Nothing party. In the sixth district an "Old Line Whig" accepted the nomination, with a clear field against the Democrats, while in the Fifth district its candidate found strong opposition from both Democrats and Republicans. The entire remaining field had been pre-empted by the Republicans.

The diligent and microscopic search for candidates, who were willing to offer themselves for slaughter on Election day, sapped the State Council of all its Fillmore enthusiasm. Popular sentiment in Illinois showed a keen appreciation of the changing feeling in regard to slavery as seen in the phenomenal growth of the Fusion party;¹ yet there was still a considerable Fillmore following, men who were wedded to the Compromise principle. Buckner S. Morris, candidate for governor, in his letter of acceptance, states their view when he says: "Ought not Mr. Fillmore be elected? He is an experienced statesman, and an honest man, as all know and admit. His fair fame is without a blot or blemish thereon. This is more than can be said of the other two. His election will restore peace and confidence to the people. The bona fide citizens of the territories will be protected in the enjoyment of all their rights and privileges, and all outside or foreign interference will cease, and the people of the territory left to pursue their own happiness in peace, and they may admit or refuse slavery as their best judgment shall dictate."² Such fulminations from the official spokesman of his party meant little, except to those who sought to satisfy their sluggish consciences in compromise. Whatever popularity the

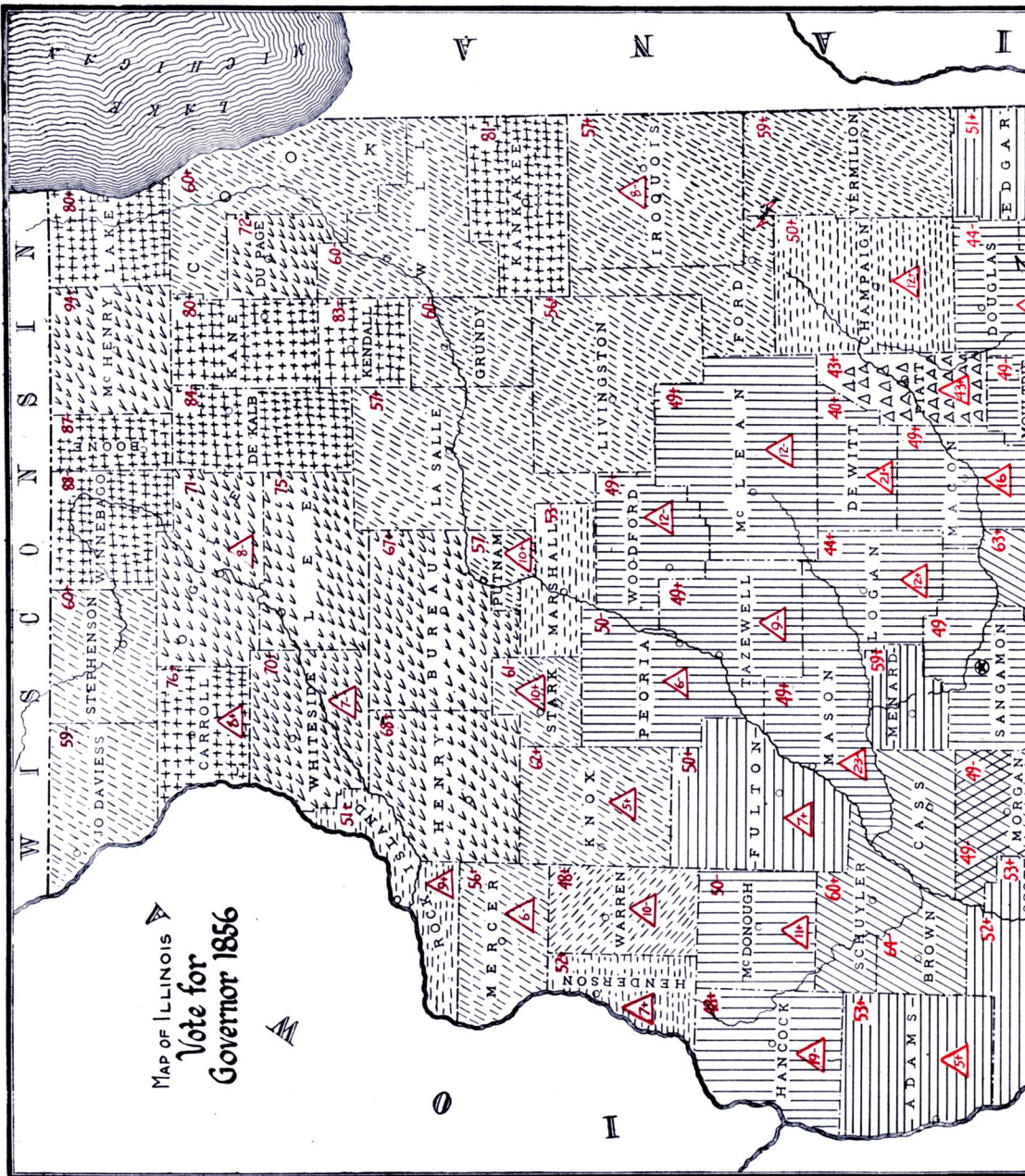
while the other three ranged themselves with the Republicans. After a long search the ticket was doctored up as follows:

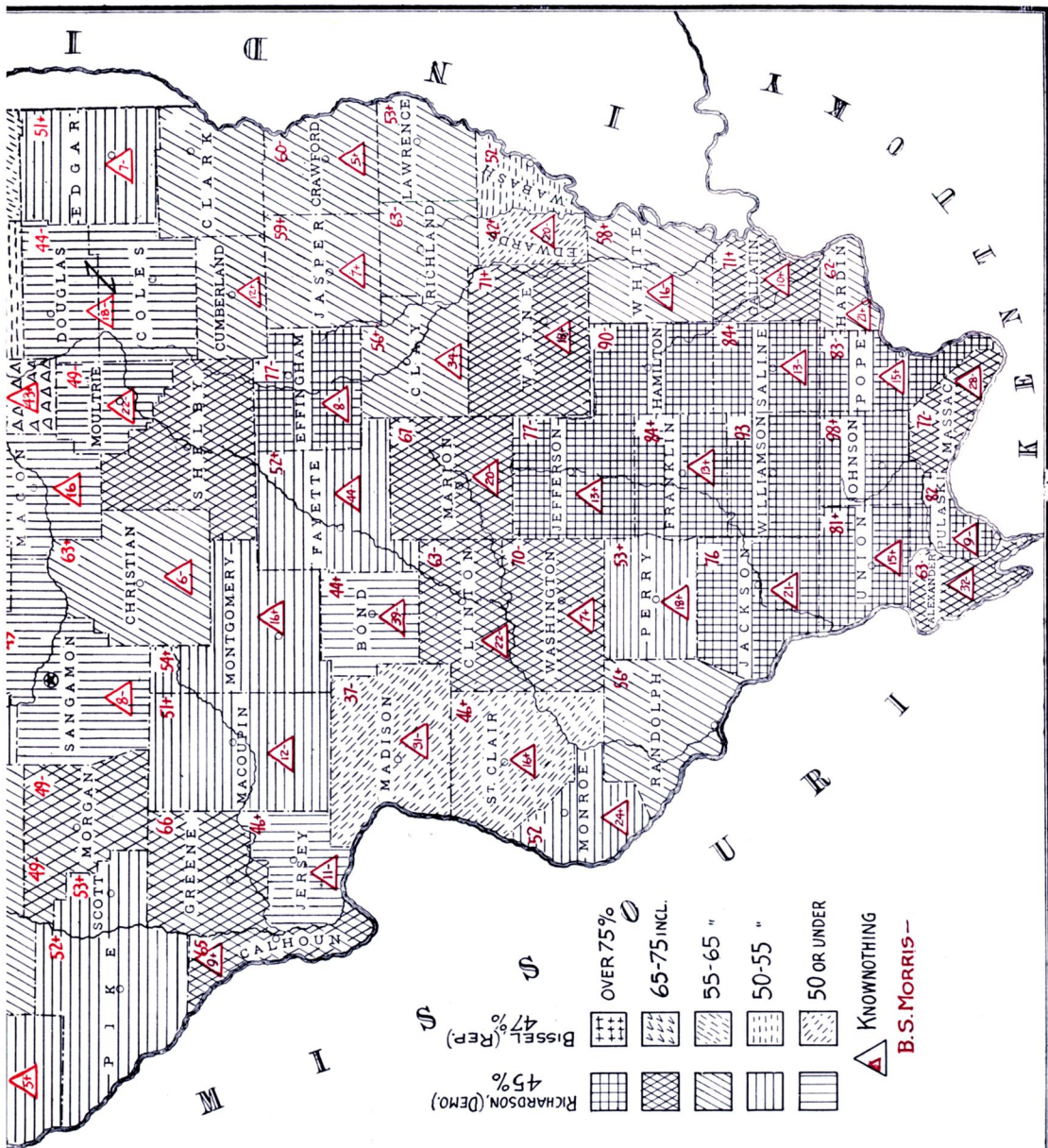
Governor, Buckner S. Morris, of Cook county.
 Lieut. Governor, T. B. Hickman, of Fayette county.
 Secretary of State, Wm. H. Young, of Logan county.
 Auditor of State, Hiram Barber, of Washington county.
 State Superintendent, Ezra Jenkins, of Fayette county.

None of them were known outside their respective counties, except Morris.

¹ The prime movers of the Know-Nothings transferred their allegiance to the Republican ranks by the spring of 1856.

² Illinois State Register, Aug. 16, 1856. The entire letter does not contain a solitary allusion to the Know-Nothing tenets.

[illegible]



Know-Nothings had in the campaign, was due not to the personnel of the State ticket, for that possessed neither merit nor the power to arouse enthusiasm, but to the man whom thousands were ready to follow as their champion of Union and Compromise. The nominations were not uncommonly regarded as a travesty upon the political intelligence of an enlightened people. The contemporary press seldom referred to the State candidates, except in derision, but flashed in bold head-lines the announcement of Fillmore meetings as "Old Line Whigs Rally," and "Enthusiastic Fillmore Meeting."¹

The Know-Nothings labored in the face of insuperable obstacles² to make a strong showing at the polls. The election returns however, revealed no commensurate results. In Central and Southern Illinois, the home of the Union Whigs and the Anti-Nebraskans, their success was most pronounced. Fillmore carried five counties by a liberal margin over Buchanan and received sixteen per cent of the total vote cast in the State. Of these five counties, B. S. Morris, candidate for governor, carried only one, and polled hardly eight per cent of the State's total vote.³ The relative standing of the two candidates represent in part, an expression of Fillmore's popularity, but more particularly a protest against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The Union men who had no sympathy with the pro-Nebraskans in Southern Illinois and who nurtured a strong dislike for the abolition doctrines held in Northern Illinois, found an outlet for their feeling in voting the Fillmore ticket. The same idea was further expressed in the election of William H. Bissell, Republican candidate for governor, over his rival William A. Richardson, a Democrat. From a comparison of the election

¹ Illinois State Register, Aug. 7, 1856. The Register delights to comment upon Fillmore and his following: "From numerous demonstrations throughout the state, it is obvious that a very large body of the Illinois Whigs will never be inveigled into the Fremont ranks, those that will not vote for Buchanan will vote for Fillmore. . . . While we oppose both the Fillmore and Fremont tickets, we decidedly prefer the former to the latter." Illinois Journal, Oct. 27, 1856. A train of young ladies toured the State. These ladies were dressed to represent the different states of the Union.

² Already in the fall of 1855, as soon as secrecy of the Order was officially abolished, and the irritation caused by the discussions of slavery over, lodges throughout the Northern part of the State gave up their charters, and many lodges in Central and Southern Illinois disbanded. The Chicago Tribune quoted by the Illinois Journal, Aug. 23, 1855, says: "Lodges that once boasted of 300 members are now reduced to fifty, and those of fifty have barely enough for organization. These facts with the throwing up of charters in every county are significant. . . ."

³ A comparison of the maps showing the election results for President and for Governor will emphasize this point.

returns it may be observed that had the percentage of votes Fillmore received over Morris been cast for Fremont as they were for Bissell,¹ the Republican candidate for president would have carried the State instead of Buchanan.² In this election, as heretofore in Illinois, the Know-Nothings proved themselves only a minor factor and unrewarded with office they pass from the political field. But they had not been without a purpose. Though transient, the Know-Nothing party, for a brief period, nursed the political hopes of men with uncertain party affiliations.

That the "Midnight Lantern" Order was destined to only an ephemeral existence in Illinois was clear from the start. Many Whigs who preferred Fillmore, felt themselves aggrieved in 1852, when Gen. Scott won the nomination at the Baltimore Convention. They looked upon him as the "cat's-paw" of Seward, the champion of Free Soilism, whom not a few suspected of designs upon the presidency in 1856.³ As the political discord was augmented in Pierce's administration, the Union Whigs began to see in the Know-Nothing movement an opportunity to resusci-

¹ Alton Daily Courier, Oct. 24, 1856, states that the Fillmore Club of Centralia resolved to vote for Bissell instead of Morris. Illinois Journal, July 10, 1856, observes that a large portion of the Know-Nothings throughout Southern Illinois favored Bissell. Illinois State Register, Nov. 20, 1856, has the official election returns which bear out the statement.

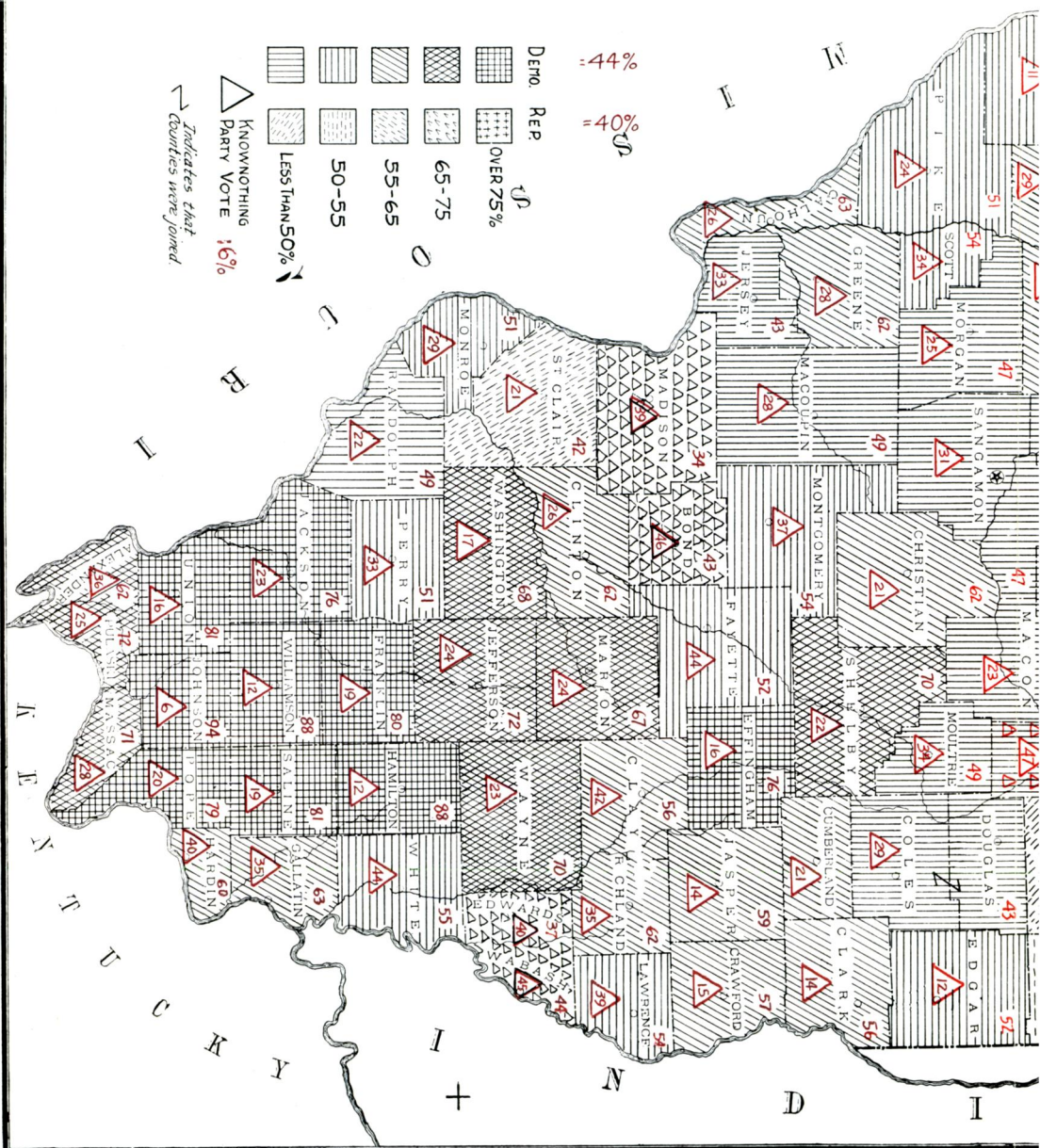
² Illinois State Register, Oct. 13, 1856, p. 2. A confidential letter by Lincoln to Fillmore Organ in Springfield dated Sept. 15, 1856.

"Dear Sir:—I understand you are a Fillmore man. Let me prove to you that every vote withheld from Fremont and given to Fillmore in this State, actually lessens Fillmore's chances of being president. Suppose Buchanan gets all the slave states and Pennsylvania, and any other one state besides, then he is elected, no matter who gets all the rest. But suppose Fillmore gets the slave states of Maryland and Kentucky, then Buchanan is not elected. Fillmore goes into the House of Representatives and may be made president, by a compromise. But suppose again, Fillmore's men throw away a few thousand votes on him in Indiana and Illinois, it will inevitably give these states to Buchanan, which will more than compensate him for the loss of Maryland and Kentucky, will elect him, and will leave Fillmore no chance in the House of Representatives or out of it. This is as plain as adding up the weight of three small hogs. As Fillmore has no possible chance to carry Illinois for himself, it is plainly to his interest to let Fremont take it and thus keep it out of the hands of Buchanan. Be not deceived: Buchanan is a hard horse to beat in this race. Let him have Illinois and nothing can beat him; he will get Illinois if men persist in throwing away votes upon Fillmore. Does some one persuade you that Fillmore can carry Illinois? Nonsense. There are over seventy newspapers in Illinois opposing Buchanan, only three or four of which support Fillmore, all the rest are going for Fremont. Are not these newspapers a fair index of the proportion of voters? If not, tell me why. Again of these three or four Fillmore newspapers, two at least are supported in part by Buchanan men, as I understand. Do not they know where the shoe pinches? They know the Fillmore Movement helps them, and therefore they help it. Do think these things over, and then act according to your judgment.

Yours truly

A. Lincoln."

³ Alton Daily Courier, July 12, 1852.
Illinois State Register, Sept. 30, 1852.



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L A K E
M I C H I G A N

tate their own party with something of its old time energy; and so, without giving up any of their old traditions, or yielding any of their party principles,¹ they adopted the new organization as their own. They, and all others who rallied under the Know-Nothing standard drew upon themselves also the attack to which the Order was constantly exposed in the East. Douglas and his followers adroitly manipulated the attack and directed their abuse with withering effect. The press, the stump, in fact, every artifice known to the politician, were used to befuddle the mind of the public with reference to the aims of the new party. Conditions in Illinois furnished no basis of fact for the malicious tactics; yet in self-defence, to shield their own party disorganization,² the Democrats exhausted every possible resource to focus attention upon their opponents, and for this purpose they borrowed the information from the Eastern papers.³

But abuse alone failed to dwarf the growth of the Know-Nothing party. A most vulnerable attack was made upon it when pro-Nebraskans under one subterfuge or another secured admission to the membership of local lodges. The effect of this scheme was well illustrated in the session of the council at Chicago, when slavery divided the party's following and caused a definite split between the Northern and Southern leaders. All hope of forming a party into which might be gathered all the Anti-Nebraska element and uniting them into an effective opposition, was frustrated when the movement was still young. Whether signal success could have been achieved, even without the opposition already mentioned, is a matter of grave doubt. The trend of events were against the Know-Nothing movement

¹ Illinois Journal, July 10, 1854. "The Whigs of the North . . . are firmly devoted to the carrying out in good faith of the Missouri Compromise."

Illinois Journal, July 27, 1854. "The Whigs as a body will act against the Nebraskanites."

Ibid, Dec. 1, 1854. "We confess that we look to this American sentiment for the restoration of the prosperity enjoyed by this country under the tariff of 1842."

² Illinois Journal, Sept. 11, 1854.

Ibid, Sept. 16, 1854.

Urbana Union, Oct. 10, 1854.

Illinois State Register, Sept. 14, 1854.

³ The local papers are loaded with quotations from the Eastern press of street brawls, riots at the polls, supposed confessions of Know-Nothing deserters, secret conspiracies of the most diabolical nature attributed to Know-Nothings. The papers would twist the account of any disorder in such a way that the blame would fall upon the secret organization. "Hindoo Order," "Thugs," "Midnight Brawlers," "Renegades" and so forth were names constantly used in designating the Know-Nothings. See Illinois State Register, Illinois Journal, Quincy Whig, Chicago Democrat, Alton Daily Courier for 1854-56.

in Illinois. The crisis in Kansas hastened the formation of the Republican party. Before the campaign of 1854 closed sentiment was gravitating¹ toward it and success to the Know-Nothings was thereby forestalled.

The term "Know-Nothing" was more frequently applied as an opprobrious epithet than as a party designation. However, the men most actively associated with the organization were "Old Line Whigs" and it was they who remained loyal to their standard-bearer, Fillmore. There is nothing in the press or in the campaign literature, from the time that the Know-Nothing party made its appearance in Illinois in 1854, until its disappearance in 1856 which bears any resemblance to the issue² which gave rise to the party in the East. In the kaleidoscopic party changes of the day, the Know-Nothing organization served as a medium by which men of uncertain political affiliations found an easy transport to other political moorings.

¹ The Anti-Nebraska Democrats preferred the Fusion movement to an association with Old Line Whigs who were merely changing their party label from Whig to Know-Nothing. Koerner, in his *Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 21, says that "the Germans were so opposed to slavery that without exception. . . . almost all marched to the polls under the Republican banner." The array of names of men once active in the Democratic party is very prominent among fusion leaders. As a matter of fact the Fusion party had appropriated all the vital issues.

² There is no question but that in isolated communities at different times, strained feeling between the foreigner and American existed. Lawlessness was quite common and it was an easy matter for the American, in order to shield himself, to put the blame of crime upon the foreigner who, ignorant of the chicanery and sharp practices of the frontier, became the scapegoat. Perhaps the foreigner also found the word "Democracy" a lure, and under the easy election laws of the day voted the winning ticket when his vote may have decided a local election. But in no case do the files of local papers—and the writer had the opportunity to examine them in practically every county—reveal the existence of an issue to proscribe them. The very party against which the storm of protest swept in 1854 was crumbling to pieces, and from its diminishing ranks large numbers were contributed to the real opposition, the Republican party. Public opinion was shaped by the moral and political issue of slavery and not by an opposition to foreigners or to the political influence of the Roman church.

APPENDIX A.

ILLINOIS AMERICAN PLATFORM.*

The following platform is set forth and avowed as the principles of the American Party of Illinois:

1. We believe in the existence of an Almighty Being, who rules the universe, and governs nations, and to whose all wise and paternal care we are indebted for our unparalleled advancement in national and individual prosperity.

2. We admit the privilege, and will defend the right, of all persons of whatever religious sect or denomination, to exercise perfect freedom in religious opinion, and to "worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences," so long as they shall not, as a sect or church, seek to exercise any temporal power; hereby denying all wish or purpose to interfere with the religious opinions of any one.

3. We are opposed to all political associations of men composed exclusively of persons of foreign birth, and to the formation of foreign military companies in our own country.

4. The cultivation and development of a purely American sentiment and feeling—a passionate attachment to our country, and its government—of admiration of the purer days of our national existence—of veneration of our national fathers, and of emulation of the virtues, wisdom and patriotism that framed our Constitution.

5. That the time has arrived when the American party of the United States are called upon to take open, fearless, and unreserved ground upon the great question of slavery that is now agitating the people of every section of this Union; and that the intense excitement and agitation which at the present time are distracting our country upon the subject of slavery have been caused by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; and that that repeal was uncalled for, a gross violation and disregard of a sacred compact, entered into between the two great sections of this Confederacy, and in the highest degree destructive to the

*Illinois Journal, July 11, 1855.

peace and welfare of this Union—That a restoration of the Missouri Compromise, as it will restore the territory for which it was originally made to the same situation in which it was before that line was unnecessarily destroyed, so it will restore peace and harmony to the country, without injury or injustice to any portion of the Union; that while it will only give to freedom that which with due solemnity and in good faith was long since conveyed to her under the contract, it will equally preserve the full and undisputed rights acquired under it by the South, and that, therefore, the Missouri Compromise should be restored, and that in all political national contests the American party in the State of Illinois will demand of its candidates for office, among other qualifications, their open and undisguised opinions upon this question.

6. The essential modification of the naturalization laws by extending the time of residence required of those of foreign birth to entitle them to citizenship. A total repeal of all State laws allowing any but citizens of the United States the right of suffrage. But a careful avoidance of all interference with rights of citizenship already acquired under existing laws.

7. Resistance to the corrupting influences and aggressive policy of the Roman Church, unswerving opposition to all foreign influence, or interference of foreign emissaries, whether civil or ecclesiastical.

8. A radical improvement in the present system of executive patronage, which unsparingly confers rewards for political subserviency, and punishes for manly independence in political opinion and a fearless exercise of political rights.

9. The education of the youth of our land in the schools of our country, which should be open to all, without regard to condition or creed, and which shall be free from all influences of a denominational or partizan character—but in which the Holy Bible shall ever be freely introduced and read, as the book which contains the best system of morals, and the only system of pure religion, and from which every true Christian must derive the rule of his faith and practice.

10. The just and proper protection to American labor and American enterprise and genius, against the adverse policy of foreign nations; asserting also that it is both within the power and duty of the general government to aid and facilitate internal commerce by an improvement of our rivers and the harbors upon our lakes.

11. We declare our attachment to the union of these states, and while we do not partake of the fears so often entertained of its dissolution, we will endeavor to promote its perpetuity by a firm adherence to all the principles, as well of the constitution as the declaration of American independence.

12. We disclaim all right of the general government to interfere with the institution of slavery as it exists in any of the states of this Union; but we distinctly assert that Congress has full power under the Constitution, to legislate upon the subject in the territories of the United States.

13. Such a radical modification of the laws in reference to emigration as will effectually prevent the sending to our shores the paupers and felons of other nations.

14. We condemn, in the most positive manner, the assaults upon the elective franchise in Kansas, and the efforts to control the free exercise of the right of suffrage, to which every American citizen is entitled.

RESOLVED, That the principles and objects of the American party shall hereafter be everywhere distinctly and openly avowed and published; and we invite all persons who believe in true American principles, to aid us in carrying out our principles, as herein set forth—and we will cheerfully coöperate with any party as a national party, whose object it will be to carry into effect the above sentiments.

Done in Council, at Springfield, on this 11th day of July,
A. D. 1855.

W. W. DANENHOWER,
President of State Council.

HENRY S. JENNINGS, Sec'y.

APPENDIX B.

LETTER OF BUCKNER S. MORRIS ACCEPTING THE KNOW-NOTHING NOMINATION FOR GOVERNOR.*

CHICAGO, Aug. 12, 1856.

To Messrs. B. D. Eastman, A. Salisbury and others, of the Executive Committee of the American Party of the State of Illinois.

GENTLEMEN:—I had the honor of receiving yesterday, (through one of your members) your notice of the 7th inst., informing me that I had been selected by you, in behalf of those you represent, as their candidate for the office of governor of this State, at the ensuing election for State officers, and urging my acceptance thereof, &c.

In reply, allow me to state that I feel and hope I duly appreciate the honor you have conferred upon one so humble as myself, and for whom you have manifested such confidence and respect. And, although I had retired from taking any active part in political matters, yet, in these stormy times, when the integrity of the Union is threatened by internal foes, it becomes the duty of every citizen to come to its rescue, and repeal the attacks of the foes. We see in the political firmament, as well in the South as in the North, dark, angry and stormy clouds gathering in their onward course, all the ill-natured and fiery elements in their way, threatening destruction to the people of this mighty nation. And it forces upon my mind to ask: Ought Mr. Buchanan to be elected president of this nation when it is very evident, if elected, he will be in no condition to restore quiet, peace and confidence of the people, as his party are pledged to follow the miserable example set by Gen. Pierce's administration, viz: Trying by fraud and violence to force slavery into Kansas. His election *by the South* will be considered and treated by the North as another aggravated and ill-natured triumph of the slave-power over the people of the North, and

*Illinois State Register, Aug. 16, 1856.

thereby kindle anew and set in motion, all these violent feelings of hatred and blind prejudices of the people of the North against the people of the South. It will also be considered as sanctioning all those wrongs and outrages done by their partizans against the Northern emigrants in that territory. The South should know they are using the Democratic party on the present issue, under the disguise of a *national cloak*, to carry slavery into the territories by fraud and violence; that they indirectly aid and abet slavery extension, and they are unjustly exciting their brethren of the North. It is true the Democratic party is national in its organization and character, while it lends itself and its influence to the South for forcing slavery into the territories—and on this question their party ceases to be national, and becomes sectional. There is reason in all things. On the other hand, ought Mr. Fremont to be elected by the people of the North, when it is certain it will be considered and treated by their brethren in the South as a declaration of the North to dissolve the Union, and a dissolution will most likely follow with civil war, blood and carnage such as the world never saw since the downfall of the Grecian Republic. It is evident therefore, that the election of either Buchanan or Fremont, will tend, if not actually result, in the overthrow of this Government. And he that shall vote for Fremont, will be guilty of moral treason to his country.

Ought not Mr. Fillmore to be elected? He is an experienced statesman, and an honest man—as all know and admit. His fair fame is without a blot or blemish thereon. This is more than can be said of the other two. His election will restore peace and confidence to the people. The *bona fide* citizens of the territories will be protected in the enjoyment of all their rights and privileges, and all outside or foreign interference will cease, and the people of the territory left to pursue their own happiness in peace, and they may admit or refuse slavery as their best judgment shall dictate.

The Missouri Compromise Line.—The repeal of this famous act of 1820, is under the foundation of bitter strife and warfare. It has furnished the material for the demagogues and fanatics, North and South. It has put in motion all the vindictive machinery for agitation and excitement, including all the political fog, fire and smoke which could be brought to bear on the subject. Rule or ruin seems to be the determination of these Northern and Southern parties. They are fairly by the ears

in hostile conflict, and now is the time when the country needs a peacemaker. But to the repeal. Its *legal* effect is of small moment, as all know the famous ordinance of 1787 did not keep out of the territories of Indiana and Illinois negro slavery. But the people of these territories, without foreign aid societies, in forming their several constitutions, provided for the general extinguishment of slavery within their borders. Such would have been the practical effect of the act of 1820, had it not been repealed. And the only effect of the repealing statute was to enable the people of the territory to end that important question at once, while it was yet a territory, and not wait till they should form their constitution. It was only a question of *time* between the two laws. For no man denies the right to the territorial convention, to prohibit or admit slavery by its constitution. *Popular sovereignty* in the repealing act is made by the Fremont party the *raw-head and bloody-bones of slavery*, to scare and frighten the people of the North. So do the Turners make christianity. So may you make of any other good thing. The supporters of Fremont are opposed to the people in the territory managing their own affairs. So did Old England contend for the same thing against her *colonies* (Territories) which demanded of her "*popular sovereignty*."

The right to manage their own affairs, exclusive of all foreign interference. This England denied to the colonies, as does—Massachusetts and Missouri deny to Kansas. For this our fathers fought, and achieved our independence. Old Massachusetts was then in favor of "*popular sovereignty*." But where are her sons that go for Fremont now? Let her answer next November. If the principle was right in the one case, it is so in the other. I denounce all outside or foreign interference with the people of Kansas, whether by the North or South—by the Beechers, and the Atchisons, and their respective aiders and abettors, as unwarrantable and dangerous to our government. Popular sovereignty is that grand lever power in our government against all kinds of slavery. It rooted out negro slavery in the North. It extinguished it in Illinois and Indiana. By it, slavery was kept out of California. And so would have been the case with Kansas, if emigration had been left to its natural flow therein by the usual and ordinary means. The states should by law prohibit their own citizens from raising companies of armed men to go into the territories for any hostile purpose, unauthorized by the laws of the United States. And the territories should

(and so ought our own states), be provided with a registry law for voting at all elections.) It is the only means of securing the people against illegal voting. The election franchise is a right dear to every American citizen, and it should be carefully guarded and protected, for a single vote has decided the fate of empires.

In conclusion, allow me, gentlemen, to offer you, severally, my thanks for the honor you have conferred upon me, and I willingly submit to the call of my country, made through you. I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

BUCKNER S. MORRIS.